

Dear Members of the Human Services Committee of Connecticut General Assembly:

My name is Koeun Choi, I am a Resident from New Haven

I stand in support of S.B. 284: AN ACT INCREASING THE AGE FROM EIGHT TO EIGHTEEN YEARS FOR AN INCOME-ELIGIBLE PERSON TO OBTAIN MEDICAL ASSISTANCE REGARDLESS OF IMMIGRATION STATUS. Expanding access to HUSKY up to age 18 regardless of immigration status is an important step in ensuring our immigrant community has access to the healthcare we need. But our work doesn't end with expanding access up to age 18; we need to open access to HUSKY and healthcare to all immigrants of any age, including parents and adults.

My name is Koeun Choi, and I am a resident physician at Yale New Haven Hospital. I work in internal medicine, in my second year of training. In my line of work, I've come across many patients who have had difficulty accessing health care resources of this state in an outpatient primary setting, and as a result, end up admitted in the hospital in worse shape than they could have if they had gotten primary preventative care. They come in with kidneys failing leading them to require dialysis. They stay tethered to dialysis machines that are required to clean their blood every other day to stay alive. They end up staying for months in the hospital because there is no dialysis center that can accept them. I see poorly controlled diabetics leading to feet amputations requiring disability services, I see untreated high blood pressure leading to heart attacks requiring cardiac rehabilitation. I see cancer that went undiagnosed until they seed into the other organs of their body, becoming too large a problem for our regimens to handle. I see the psychological impact of being ill all the time, and the mistrust patients have as a result of years hovering at the fringe of our the healthcare system, with all their multiple health complications garnering only more dreaded memories of being stuck in the hospital. Being healthy is not always a given. It is years of good habits and preventative medicine. Healthcare is a human right and when we raise our children, regardless of their background, to seek help early when they need it, to build good habits when they can, to catch illnesses when able, it builds our community up and we are able to flourish together. At the end of the day, the children are faultless and they brim with potential. We need to remind ourselves of our obligation we have to to support and nurture their health to support and nurture our community's wellbeing.

I support S.B. 284 and I ask the committee to support and pass this legislation. Looking forward, I ask the committee to work towards opening access to all immigrants regardless of age.

Thank you for your time,

Koeun Choi MD

